

APA 5 Year Strategic Plan 2019-2024



Vision

APA's vision is of a just world where all people are equally empowered to realise their full potential; where all will have universal access to basic services such as food, shelter, education and health.

Mission

APA's mission is to work globally in a spirit of partnership with local communities and institutions to facilitate equal access to basic services and empower the most vulnerable citizens of the world to reach their full potential.

Values

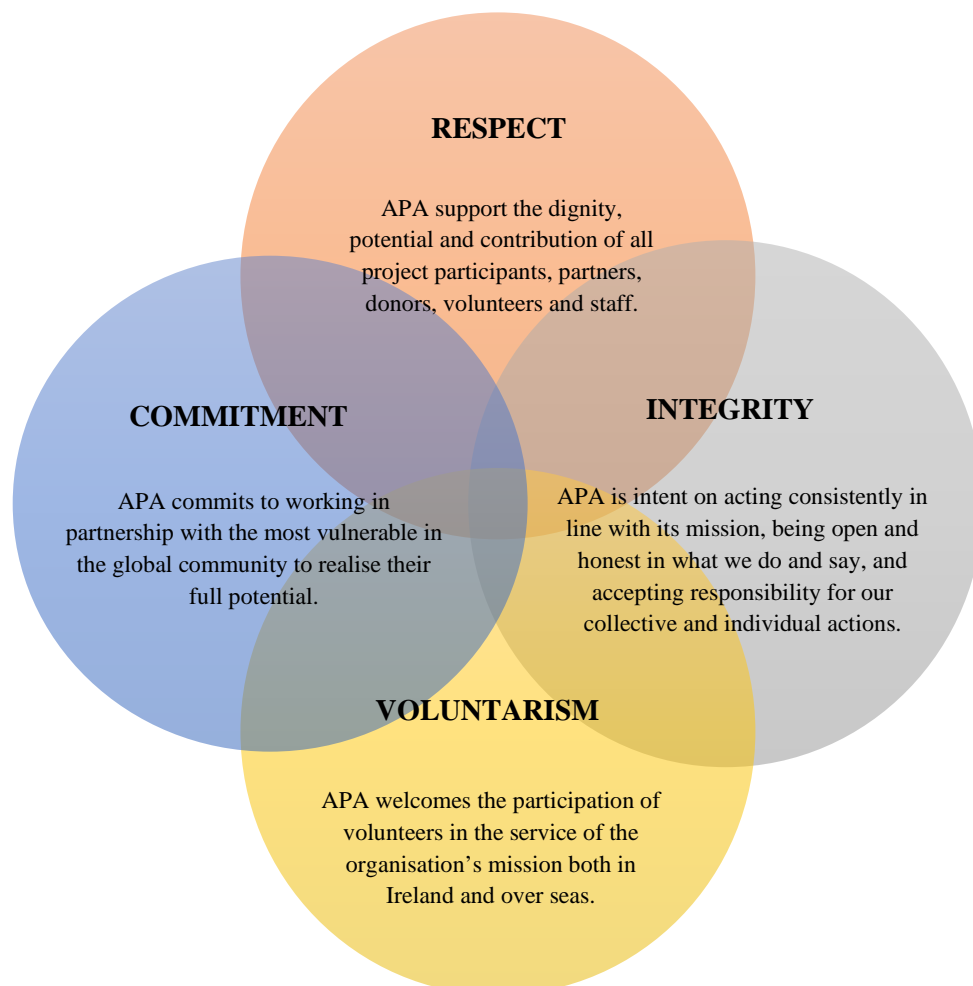


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I. Executive Summary

A Partnership with Africa (APA) is an Irish NGO based in Dublin, Ireland that was founded in 2004 as a registered company and charity. APA facilitates development through partnership with people in Africa; it mobilises its diverse stakeholder base to connect African institutions and organisations and communities to global resources. Its work focuses especially on the empowerment of women, girls, and children, and many of the vulnerable and marginalised groups in Ethiopia and Tanzania and supports them in advocating for their rights, rebuilding their lives and dignity, and earn a living wage from their work. In the first place APA facilitates bridging local organisations in respective project areas to international resources to build the capacity of local actors, supporting them as they initiate and implement their community-driven change. Secondly, it seeks to raise awareness in the global North on the realities of life for the most at-risk populations in Africa.

APA works in a spirit of partnership, and central to this partnership model is APA's relationship with the Italy based NGO, Comunita Volontari per il Mondo (CVM – '*Community Volunteers of the World*'). CVM is APA's primary implementing partner in programme countries in Africa, and the two organisations formalized their working partnership with a consortium agreement in 2004, updating it in 2009, 2015, and most recently in 2019. Additionally the two organisations share a similar development philosophy which promotes capacity building, and together the organisations developed a joint five-year strategic plan spanning from 2017 to 2022 detailing the joint-programming in Africa. Both organisations share a history of successful project implementation in Africa, share common organisational values, and have established an efficient working relationship over 15 years of partnership.

This present APA-focused strategic plan should be viewed as supplemental to the APA-CVM joint strategic plan.

APA's strategic approach in both Africa and the global North is articulated through a "theory of change" present here in section IV which outlines each of APA's core activities and how they achieve the desired outcomes. APA's strategy can be summarized in the following way:

- APA identifies injustice among at-risk communities and categories in selected countries in Africa due to its history of working in close partnership with these, listening to local leaders and facilitating their empowerment.
- It documents and presents information for likeminded organisations to engage with these challenges thus forging strategic partnerships with them.
- APA provides programme support to implementing partners (in both the global North and South)
- It facilitates awareness-raising activities in the global North.

- APA achieves its outcomes by building the capacity of local people to achieve their own sustainable development; APA fosters global citizenship in the global North; and it promotes volunteerism as a core value.

The strategic plan is broken down into four primary pillars of the organisation, which outline the organisation's key strategic priorities. These include:

Strategic Partnerships: This section outlines the importance of APA's role as a networking organisation, through its unique relationship with CVM to bridge a diverse set of northern stakeholders to local African project organisations, both NGO and government.

Awareness Raising: This section outlines activities to expand APA's network of volunteer led charity shops in Ireland, increase media output, and expand the Global Citizenship Education program; each of these activities are designed to be conscientious and spread awareness in an effort to foster a network of concerned and dedicated global citizens.

Program Support: APA provides support to implementing partners. This section outlines its efforts to promote the values of sustainable development with implementing partner organisations, emphasizing collaboration with key local stakeholders such as host country governments. It also describes APA's ongoing support through strategic consultations, monitoring, evaluation and research.

Organisational Operations: This final section provides an outline of APA's internal operations, noting the strong foundation the organisation has in the recruitment and management of volunteers.

The final section of the strategic plan, Section VII, *Moving Forward*, details areas of the organisation that require ongoing monitoring to strengthen and facilitate long-term sustainability. These areas of discussion include: board of governance, key person dependencies, specialist staff, outsourcing of work and partnerships with key organisations.

II. APA at a Glance:

A Partnership with Africa (APA) is an Irish NGO based in Dublin, Ireland that was founded in 2004¹ as a registered company. APA is a networking organisation, which mobilises diverse stakeholders to connect African organisations to global resources. APA's work focuses on empowering women, girls, and children in Ethiopia and Tanzania to access their rights, rebuild their lives and dignity, and earn a living wage from their work. The main activities of its projects over these years include: HIV prevention and care and promoting an integrated response to the HIV-AIDS pandemic, facilitating community care of orphaned

¹Company Number: 372427; Charity Number: CHY 15814; CRA Number: 20055547

children and their access to basic services (food, shelter, health care and education) gender-based violence, early marriage, and exploitative working conditions of women and girls (working in bar/hotel and house work) and their access to education, women's cooperatives; promoting inclusion of ethnic minorities; establishing drinking water systems, cooperatives, income generating activities, etc.

Initially APA bridges local African organisations to international NGOs, agencies, institutions, researchers and businesses to build the capacity of local actors in Africa, supporting them as they implement their own community-driven change.

As a follow-on from Africa, APA seeks to awaken and raise awareness in the global North on the realities of life for the most at-risk populations in Africa in an effort to promote global citizenship, awareness and sensitivity. The organisation is rooted in a spirit of volunteerism, and fosters volunteer-led committees and businesses in Ireland to directly support the efforts of the partners in Africa.

III. History and Profile

APA was incorporated on the 18th of June 2003 by Fr. Owen Lambert CSSp (Holy Ghost – Spiritan priest) and friends. Fr. Lambert had lived and worked from 1974 in East Africa mainly in Ethiopia and Tanzania. APA received charitable status in 2004.

When APA was founded in 2004 Ethiopia and Tanzania were in the midst of the AIDS crisis that plagued Africa at that time. The original aims of the organisation were to promote a broad-spectrum response to HIV-AIDS, integrating prevention and care as top priorities. “The APA ethos is to work with the local people within a region's social structure - medical, educational, health, political, influential leaders and religious leaders; to educate them and provide them with the skills and support so they in turn can educate and mobilize their local communities.”

In 2014, due to the evolution of the organisation in working in other areas such as: women's and children's rights; ethnic minorities and development education in Ireland it was decided by the board that it was appropriate to change the name of the organisation to reflect this widening of its remit. The name was changed from *AIDS Partnership with Africa* to *A Partnership with Africa* (APA). All relevant legal documents were changed at that time. All policy and procedure documents were changed as soon as possible after that date.

IV. Call to Action:

The Development of All People

APA's goal is to build a fairer world for its inhabitants. Forms of global injustice and marginalization are widespread in all communities and continue to oppress entire populations around the globe. The development of each person and of all peoples remains the primary

objective of the organisation. Historically, APA has supported marginalised and most at-risk groups and individuals by encouraging their own personal empowerment as well as the acceptance and advocacy from community members in positions of power and privilege. People living with HIV/AIDS, those living with unequal access to food, shelter and water and individuals and groups who have historically lacked fair access to education have been the primary focuses for APA. The organisation follows the model of enabling the most at-risk and marginalised groups who have been trapped in cycles of poverty and oppression including bar workers, domestic workers, and others who seek recognition, respect and acceptance from the local, national and global community and their institutions, to realize their basic human rights.

Capacity Building

Widespread lack of awareness and disregard for of the rights of the most at-risk and marginalised groups of people should be considered a crime against humanity as it deprives such people of a fair and just chance to succeed either personally and socially. As a result, APA aims to combat these crimes against humanity in a way that builds the capacity of individuals around the world by unlocking their own potential. The increase of human dignity, hope and awareness offers an opportunity for people to freely define their own paths and projects for development, free from external economical oppression and within their own reasonable limits.

Partnership

APA aims to work globally in a spirit of partnership to facilitate equal access to the basic services in an effort to empower the most vulnerable citizens of the world to reach their full potential. Partnership is a key aspect to APA's approach, as is represented in their joint efforts with CVM (Community of Volunteers in the World) in Italy, with whom APA maintains a long-term consortium agreement. Together, they have committed to joining efforts in the sectors within which they work. They also seek to partner with existing structures and combine resources in order to maximise their impact.

Education and Awareness

The organisation's mission and policies should inform its projects, but at the same time, the projects should enter into a complete circular dialogue in order to inform the policies and mission. APA pledges to integrate its policies into its work so that the policies are not only reference points for board members, volunteers, staff and projects, but ultimately also support the mission and vision of all of the organisation and partners' work. APA pledges to approach their policies in a spirit of education and awareness, not only for those impacted by projects, but also for its board of directors, volunteers, staff, local authorities, and other community members with whom they engage. Additionally, APA recognizes the importance of promoting global citizenship throughout the world and is dedicated to educating the next generation on global challenges. It is through education that APA firmly believe it can develop a strong foundation for sustainable development in Africa

V. *APA's Theory of Change – A Methodology for Promoting Social Change*

The theory of change details actions APA directly takes to influence community change in target program communities in Africa. At the core of the theory of change is the philosophy that sustainable community development is best led by the community themselves, and thus APA seeks to build the capacity, educate, and provide key assistance so that the target communities can address their own challenges. The key outcome of APA's work is to create a robust, healthy civil society operating in the target communities. Additionally, all of the programs are geared towards raising awareness on global injustice and inequalities, as well as fostering a spirit of volunteerism across the North and South. APA achieves this goal through fostering Global Citizenship and awareness raising in Ireland, partnership and network expansion, and strategic oversight of African partners. In this regard, APA works in the shadows of its partners, empowering implementing organisations in Africa through providing key networks and expertise that empower local community led change.

APA's theory of change promotes partnership as a vehicle for development. As a result, the key partnership with Italy based implementing organisation (CVM) is critically important. By partnering with CVM, APA gains a doorway to working directly with the most at-risk communities, allowing them to propose sustainable development to its supported projects in Ethiopia and Tanzania.

Not only does the partnership model enable sustainable development in African communities, but it also acts a conduit to promote partnership as a global value. For APA, "partnership" includes more than organisation-to-organisation alliances; it also includes local institutions and global citizens combining efforts to affect positive change. The model promotes schools investing in educating youth to become informed global citizens who drive the value of partnership in their communities. It brings together likeminded individuals to form small, grassroots organisations fighting for global equality. Above all, it encourages a partnership between the global North and the global South to mutually support human dignity and potential in the world's most at-risk communities.



APA's theory of change can be understood as the life cycle of a tree. First, a **seed** is planted; the seed represents the DNA of APA, which is rooted in its efforts of addressing global injustice through partnerships. Through APA's experience of working in Africa, it is keenly aware of the harsh realities the most marginalized people face on a regular basis. This experience is key to planting the seed that will lead to addressing the many inequalities. The seed of the tree creates an awakening of likeminded organisations to the reality that we must act collectively if we are to overcome the many challenges of 21st century outlined by U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The seed then takes **root** and flourishes into a network of global citizenship. The roots are represented by APA's Global Citizenship Education programs and awareness building activities facilitated in the global North. Through its Global Citizenship Education

programmes APA builds partnerships between schools, which foster awareness about the current global challenges as outlined by the SDGs. APA recognizes the importance of inspiring global citizenship among today's youth; by educating youth, APA builds an active, civic-minded population passionate about the global inequalities that APA's sponsored programs address. Education is key to awareness-raising, which is crucial for ensuring African partners are supported by future generations. By creating partnership among global citizens, APA inspires activism. For example, in Ireland, APA coordinates voluntary groups and committed individuals who have come together under APA's guidance to launch self-sustaining, volunteer-led charity shops that directly support program implementing partners in Africa. Active, engaged citizens are the roots of APA's model and are the lifeline of support to activities in the field in Africa.

The roots then grow into the **trunk**, which represent the partnerships that emerge out of like-minded global citizens, organisations, and groups seeking to affect global change. APA has the history and the knowledge to best facilitate partnerships among likeminded northern and southern teams to support sustainable development. As a result, APA acts as the core of the trunk, which keeps the partnerships alive through acting as a bridge between key stakeholders. The trunk is the backbone that ensures that local African communities have the resources and support necessary to develop solutions to their own unique challenges.

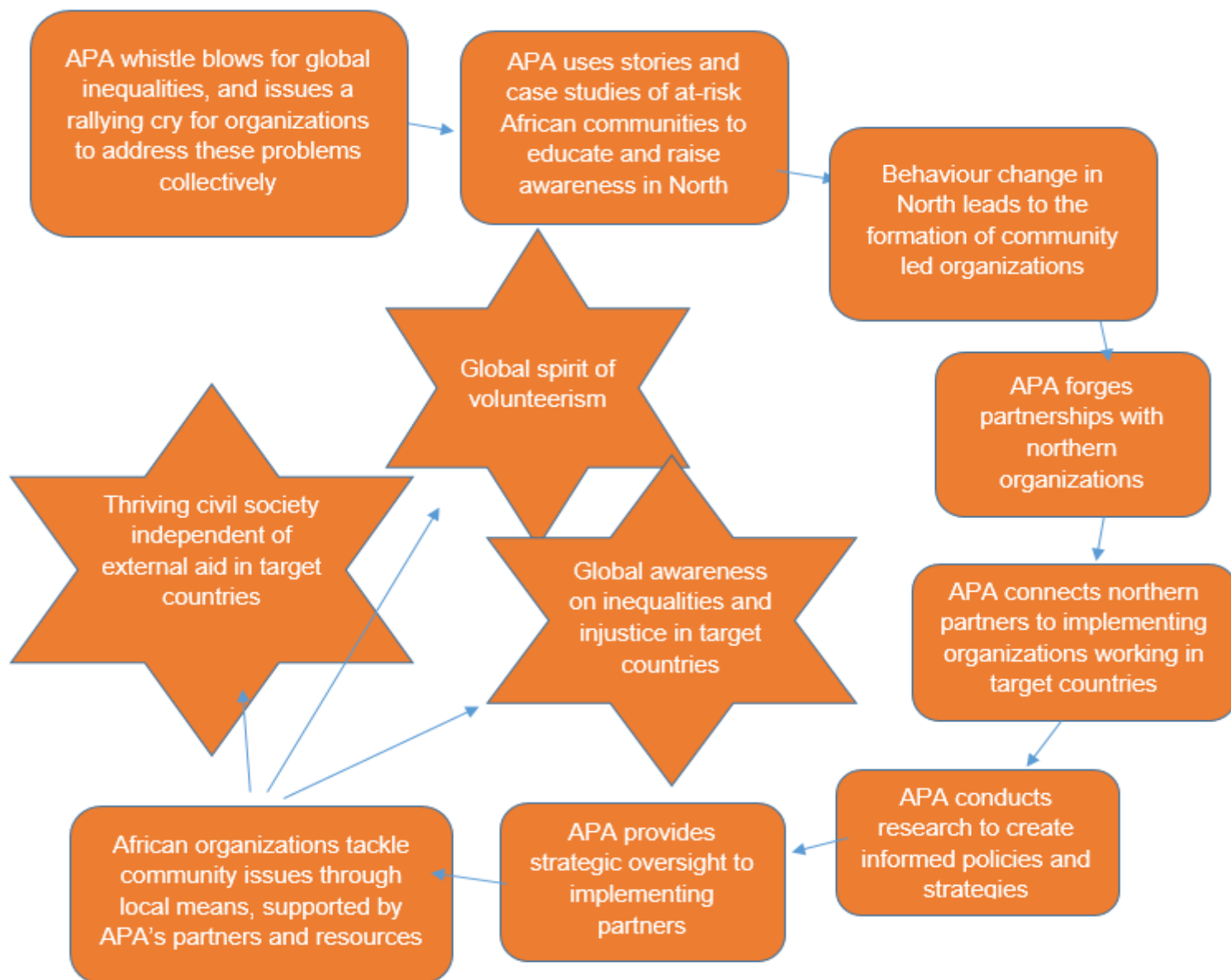
The **branches** of the tree are the projects which are a result of these partnerships. According to APA's development model, grassroots organisations are central to the design, implementation and eventual sustainability of its projects. And through this process, the local communities gain ownership in the projects, allowing for culturally and context specific methods to be applied to each community within which APA works. The partnerships between local organisations, with support from APA, are key to stimulating a thriving civil society in APA target communities in Africa. Additionally, the branches also take shape in APA's Global Citizenship Education and awareness raising activities in the North, which are built through partnerships schools and likeminded NGOs across the North.

Finally, the **fruits** of the tree represent the results of this global movement and the impact on beneficiaries, which ultimately nurture the next generation of active citizens throughout the global North and the global South. The fruits of the tree are represented by three key outcomes.

First, the partnership model and the strategic oversight that APA provides creates a thriving civil society, independent of external support in program target countries.

Secondly, APA's networks and awareness raising activities allow the organisation to achieve two additional outcomes: fostering a spirit of volunteerism throughout both the North and South, as well as building a global awareness for the realities and challenges of the most at-risk populations in Africa. Central to the entire theory of change is fostering teams of initiative-taking and driven individuals and communities / groups seeking societal change. APA focuses its efforts on connecting people, then guiding these global citizens into action. The power of the partnership model is how APA connects the organisations it supports. Eventually these organisations begin to support each other to make long lasting change.

The graph below details each step within APA's theory of change, and how it leads to a sustainable thriving civil society in APA's target countries.



VI. Partnership with Comunita Volontari per il Mondo / Community of Volunteers for the World (CVM)

APA's core implementing partner is CVM based in Italy. Since 2004, APA and CVM have established a formal partnership through a Consortium Agreement, reviewing these in 2009 and 2015 respectively. And in 2017, APA and CVM designed a joint, four-year strategic plan overseeing the development of shared program target countries. CVM shares APA's values, development philosophy, and strategic targets for driving sustainable

development in the world's most at risk communities. It is for these reasons that CVM is a most suitable strategic partner. In this relationship, APA focuses its strengths on networking, advocacy, development education, research, monitoring and evaluation, and policy and strategic oversight. On the other hand, CVM provides the on-the-ground infrastructure to carry out project implementation and handle day-to-day relations with local African partners. Through APA's partnership with CVM, APA is able to ensure that all programs are run efficiently on the ground, combining the efforts and resources of like-minded organisations in order to maximize impact on the ground rather than duplicating the cost for material and human resources. Regular meetings are held between the management of both organisations to monitor progress against targets and to assess risks and opportunities. The strategy of each organisation reflects the key role the partner organisation plays.

Thus, the ongoing partnership with CVM is of utmost importance in achieving the goals of this strategic plan.

It is APA and CVM's history of collaboration that is central to the trust between the organisations and the effectiveness of the mutual work. Both organisations have a rich history of working in East Africa, originally through a collaborative effort in addressing the AIDS epidemic in Ethiopia and Tanzania. Over the last decade and a half this partnership has strengthened, allowing for both organisations to collaborate quickly and effectively due to well-worn grooves of communication. It is for these reasons that APA chooses to work with CVM as an implementing partner.

The two organisations devised a joint five-year strategic plan in 2017 which outlines the program targets in East African communities, while [this strategic plan document](#) is designed to outline APA's role in this partnership and is meant to be used in tandem with the joint strategic plan of both organisations.

VII. Where We Work



APA is dedicated to supporting the most at risk communities in Africa. In the past, APA have supported African partner organisations in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania. In Ethiopia, APA's community partners are located in Addis Ababa, and the regions of Kaffa, Amhara, and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR). In Tanzania partners are located in Bagamoyo and Morogoro regions. Finally, APA has a

small program operating in Kenya. APA is continually researching a variety of countries and regions for possible program expansion.

VIII. Strategic Priorities: The “Bridge for Development”

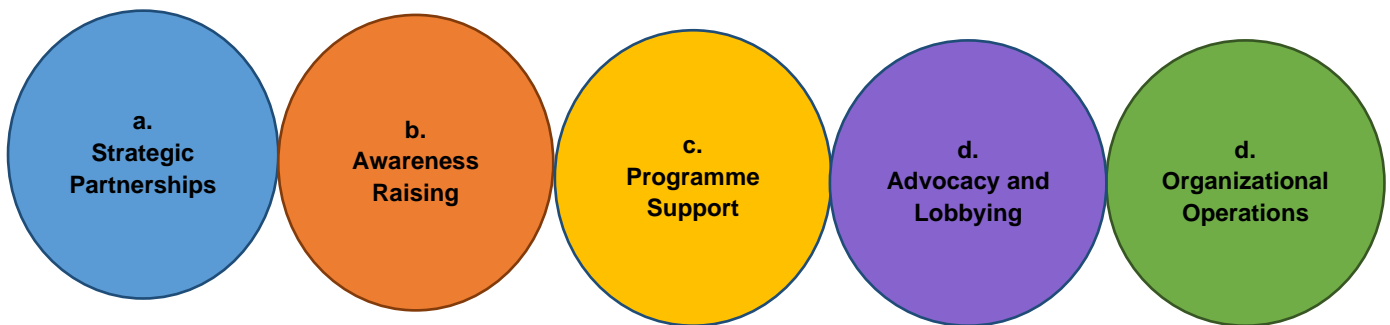
APA’s five-year strategic vision for development is centred on fostering community development in Africa by facilitating partnerships among southern and northern stakeholders. APA is in a unique position to fulfil this role due to its experience of working with international development actors, such as institutional donors, universities, grassroots organisations, and consultants. APA’s reputation at the local level in East Africa allows for its programs to include and value local government stakeholders as well, which APA believes to be an important aspect to the long-term success of programs.

APA’s 5 year strategy echoes the sentiments of the U.N. Agenda 2030; the 2030 agenda outlines 17 goals and 169 targets, requiring “an intensive global engagement in support of implementation of all the Goals and targets, bringing together Governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations system and other actors and mobilizing all available resources.” APA believes that the model of facilitating partnerships addresses this key aspect of the Sustainable Development Goals. In the past, our efforts focused on SDG 17 have directly led to results in 9 additional SDGs in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Kenya.



APA's partnership activities are supported by its ongoing efforts in providing strategical support through program support to implementing partners, awareness raising in the global north, and ensuring that internal operations are robust and sustainable to ensure our networks continue to thrive in the years to come.

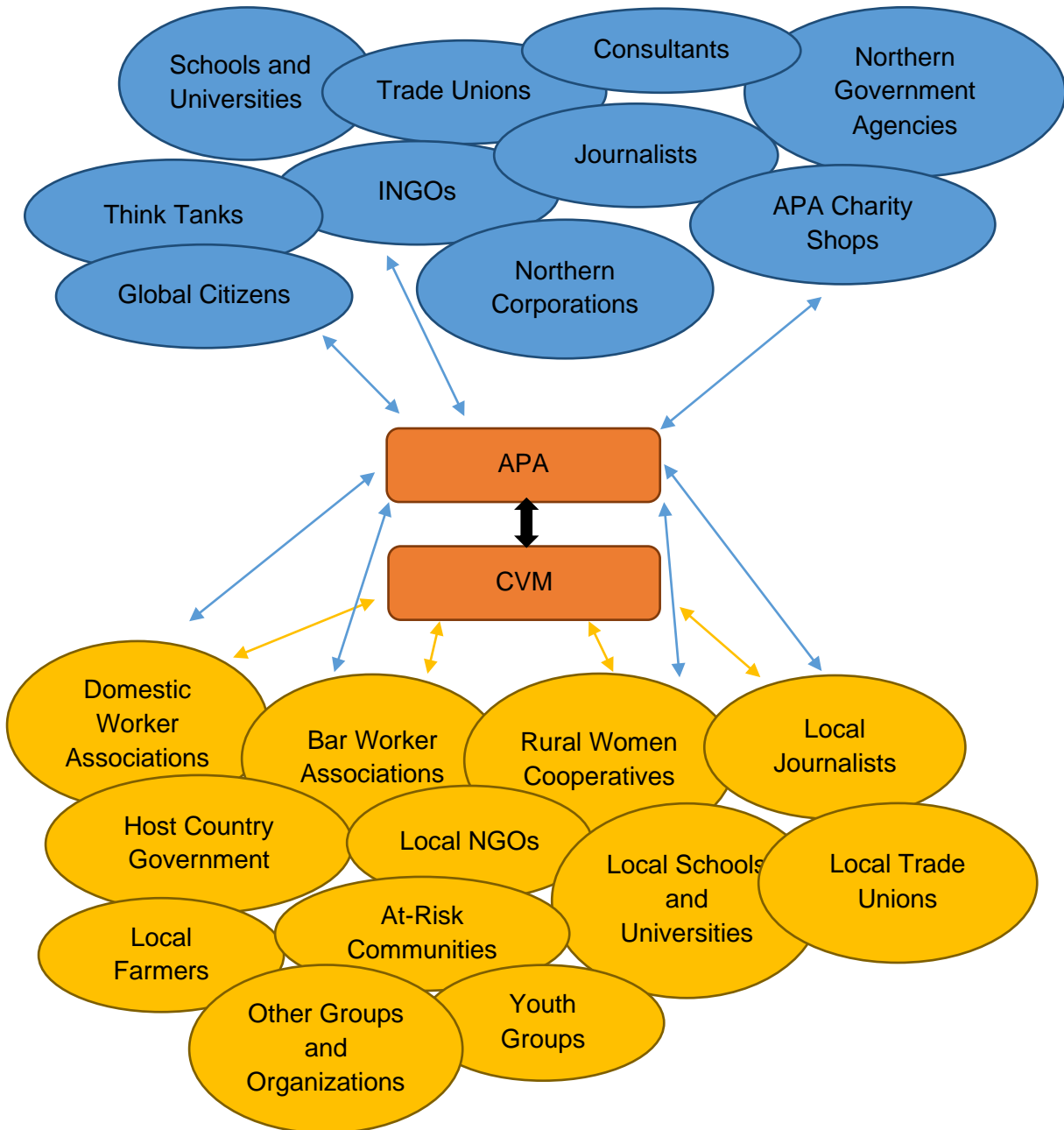
The Strategic Priorities of this five-year plan are broken down into four core pillars that encompass APA's key areas of activity: Strategic Partnerships, Program Support, Awareness Raising, and Organisational Operations. The strategic priorities are not ranked according to value, but rather each of these priorities is pursued with equal importance.



a. Strategic Partnerships

APA understands that long-term community development is dependent on a vibrant local civil society that works with local institutions and is not driven through foreign ideas with foreign strategic targets. APA believes that it can support the development of a robust civil society capable of addressing its own challenges through forging key partnerships with implementing organisations and linking them with strategic partners in the global North. This partnership allows for local ideas to be empowered by international resources.

Central to the partnership model and allowing northern resources to reach southern implementing partners is the relationship with CVM. The partnership model, and how APA connects northern organisations to southern implementers with CVM is demonstrated through the following graph:



Through the connection with CVM, APA is able to channel support to assist the development of associations aimed to improve the rights and conditions of vulnerable people, including: farmers, local cooperatives, domestic workers, bar workers, widows, and street children, among many others. APA also understands that local government and institutions buy-in is fundamental for establishing a healthy civil society, and thus APA encourages all partners and local associations to include government into the project design and sustainability plans of their projects. The local organisations and civil society groups that APA and CVM target are outlined in more detail throughout the APA/CVM joint strategic

plan. Currently, APA solidifies partnerships by leading international meetings and conferences, organizing forums, and connecting local and international organisations.

Partnership activities outlined above continue to expand, and currently include:

Connecting African community organisations and beneficiaries to the following counterparties:

- Journalists to help raise awareness of the realities in the most at risk communities;
- Local government to better ensure government buy-in, local ownership, and long term sustainability;
- Local organisations with similar missions and values, helping align the efforts of small actors so that a bigger impact can be made;
- International and national institutions, such as legal groups and labour unions, to help support the development of peoples' rights in program countries (past examples have included the African Lawyers Association and the International Domestic Workers Federation);
- Leading global research institutions and universities, to conduct high level research and help us best understand how to serve our target communities;
- Private sector corporations with a corporate social responsibility that match the needs of communities;
- Markets to provide further catalysts for rural development;
- Donor opportunities to broaden their funding horizons;
- International consultants and technical specialists to help build the professional capacity of their local staff;
- Training and educational programs, to build the capacity of community

Moving Forward: Over the next 5 years APA should continue to utilize its strengths in identifying and securing partnerships under a common cause of addressing inequalities in Africa's most at-risk communities and groups.

b. Awareness Raising

APA awareness raising activities are broken down into the following categories: global citizenship awareness, community engagement, community awareness and storytelling. Each of these three spokes of awareness raising is meant to achieve the strategic goal of creating partnerships in the north geared towards supporting southern partners.

i. Global Citizenship Education

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) is a focal point for APA's programs in Ireland. Educating and sensitizing people of Northern countries is an important step in building a support network for developmental efforts in the global South. GCE programs seek to educate all aspects of society on the importance of the SDGs, through training of trainers allowing the SDG curriculum to reach a broader audience, and through direct educational activities targeting youth and adults alike. APA GCE programme activities currently include: advocacy and campaigning to help create conducive policy responses to the SDGs; working with student/teachers to embed SDG content and GCE approaches across the curriculum; and, supporting post-primary students to undertake SDG-related actions in their communities

and, where possible, working to raise awareness in collaboration with other countries across EU and Europe.

Allowing for flow in information to pass from North to South and vice versa is an essential aspect of bridging support between global actors to local African implementing organisations. The SDGs are diverse, and are implemented into lesson plans for primary and secondary school students to carefully expose students to the realities of life for those living in harsh conditions in poor countries – and display what can and needs to be done in order to make positive changes. All efforts in development education are meant to foster a spirit of volunteerism and advocacy among youth, which ultimately leads to further community engagement.

Moving forward: In the future, APA should continue to prioritize educational efforts in the global North as a central part of its educational programs, particularly in Ireland. Educating youth on the realities of developing countries also provides an opportunity for cultural exchange and education on APA’s target program countries, which supplements the lessons focused on the sustainable development goals.

ii. Community Engagement through Charity Shops

The APA development philosophy is driven by fostering teams of likeminded individuals seeking to make a difference in the world. In the global North we build teams of volunteers who have formed volunteer-managed charity shops which support APA development efforts in the global South. These community-led volunteer groups and teams act as a gateway for APA awareness raising activities. The charity shops are important to APA income, and for APA ability to influence grassroots movements in Ireland; volunteer led groups and teams, such as the charity shops, can be a conduit for running further community events and engage the wider public. The charity shops also support and promote circular economy by ensuring a second life to goods that would normally be disposed of. By promoting the sharing and re-utilization of second-hand goods the charity shops are also contributing to waste reduction and a healthier environment.

As of 2019, APA has three charity shops in Athlone, Carlow Town, and Hacketstown. The shops are volunteer-led initiatives and dedicate 100 percent of their generated resources support APA’s projects in Africa. APA provides oversight, pays for rent, overheads, and coordinates donations to the charity shops. However, the day-to-day management of the shop is entirely driven by the host community.

Moving Forward: It should be APA’s long-term ambition to launch more charity shops in Ireland, utilising contacts and supporter networks to lay the foundation for future community led volunteer charity shops aimed at supporting APA’s partners in Africa and, at the same time, further developing the circular economy. The shops can further contribute to awareness raising in schools, promoting the concept of re-utilisation of used goods and circular economy as a model of living and APA should explore this connection and consider efforts in this area. As a secondary outcome, the charity shops will contribute to sustainable development through the promotion of a culture of recycling.

iii. Community awareness

APA is part of a wider European consortium that implements awareness in local schools and larger society in general in a coordinated effort and learning from each other.

Moving Forward: APA should continue implementing targeted programmes that raise awareness in local schools and the local societies it plays a part in to promote mutual learning and support.

iv. Storytelling

APA's role as a storyteller is critical to the organisation's ability to garner support in the global North for African partner organisations and for the most at-risk people of target countries. As a bridging organisation, it is of a high priority to relay accurate and accessible information of the realities of life in these remote African communities. Accurate information builds a sense of empathy and understanding among the viewers, which can help create global citizenship, and help educate the viewers on the work APA does. The stories emphasize the importance of supporting human dignity, and although they highlight the challenges people face, APA also highlights stories of empowerment. In APA's theory of change, storytelling plays an important role in cultivating global citizenship.

Storytelling is conducted in a variety of ways, including journalistic pieces, research publications, and programmatic reporting. APA has facilitated documentary films that highlight program communities and the challenges they face. APA team members frequently author reports, made available through APA's websites and social media channels. Promotional materials and other journalistic pieces are circulated through the website, social media, partners' distribution, and newsletters.

Moving Forward: APA should seek to increase the number of storytelling pieces produced on an annual basis and connect storytelling directly with marketing and fundraising efforts made internationally.

c. Programme Support

APA supports implementing organisations to ensure that resources are channelled most effectively into community and organisations that uphold likeminded values. APA provide strategic oversight to implementing partners through promotion of local, regional, and national government engagement, policy development and trainings, strategic consultations, monitoring and evaluation, and research.

Support of program activities in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Kenya is fundamental in ensuring that APA sponsored projects have maximum impact on the target communities. APA ensures that partner organisations support the most at-risk communities through organizing them into local associations and building their capacity so that they can spearhead their own personal and community led change. APA models a set of values for partner organisations to adopt or otherwise utilise in order to most effectively serve their communities. The following demonstrates how APA provides program support of sponsored projects in target countries.

i. Host Government Engagement



A core aspect of our strategic oversight is promoting APA local partner organisations to engage with local governments. By including local governments, the local institutions gain ownership of a project, which can lay the foundation for the continuation of a project if or when overseas resources are expended. In this way APA builds a framework for long term independent community change.

APA also notes that the most effective way to engage local governments is through simultaneously approaching government both at the local grassroots level, the regional level, and the federal level. Through forging partnerships at the local level, local politicians and key government bureaus see the progress made first-hand and begin to own the development initiatives sponsored by APA and partners. This grassroots engagement builds momentum and fosters a strong reputation at the local level, which assists in building partnerships with government at the regional and federal level.

For example, APA's key partner CVM works to educate and empower grassroots organisations seeking to improve the working conditions of domestic workers, while also holding high level meeting with federal officials, trade unions, and international institutions to reinforce the grassroots movements with institutional changes. APA believes this approach leads to sustainable development, and APA is careful to support only organisations that are in alignment with its development philosophy. Currently, APA emphasizes to all our partners the importance of developing a relationship with government from the design phase of the project through the sustainability plans.

Moving Forward: APA should continue to network with organisations that engage with host country governments and encourage all of our partners to work with local governments and institutions at all levels when able to do so.

ii. Policy Development and Trainings

APA has a thorough set of policies that promote best practices among partner organisations. APA continually researches and updates its policies in order to promote best practice. APA policy framework currently includes: data protection, child protection, safeguarding vulnerable adults, gender, conflict of interest and loyalty, social media, volunteer, fraud, risk management, fundraising, reserve, and the APA code of conduct. We ensure that our implementing partner organisations are educated and trained both on the policies themselves and on the necessity of a strong policy foundation.

Moving Forward: APA should continue to develop and update policies that best reflect APA's core values and development philosophy. APA should continue to commit to spearheading trainings so that its partner organisations share these best practices. Additionally, training African partner an organisation on best practices of organisational policies is another avenue APA should continue to build local capacities and influence grassroots development.

iii. Strategic Consultations

An additional avenue in which APA influences programs at the governance level is through regularly held strategic meetings with CVM and key stakeholders at the implementing level. These consultative meetings are meant to ensure that APA's development philosophy is being upheld by partner organisations, provide strategic advice, as well as ensure that programs are impactful in their mission as possible.

Moving Forward: APA should continue to provide strategic consultations to partner organisations through high level meetings, joint strategic planning, and through program site visits.

iv. Monitoring and Evaluation

APA frequently conducts monitoring and evaluation of programs and partner activities in target countries. These on-site visits are meant to inform the overall strategic direction and ensure quality control on APA sponsored programs in target countries. Monitoring and evaluation reports are written and used in program summaries, strategic documents, grant reports, and for promotional purposes. Through APA's monitoring and evaluation visits to program countries APA determines whether the vision and goals of the organisation are being met through our partnerships, and whether its partners are implementing programs in line with the policy framework.

Moving Forward: Monitoring and evaluation is an important aspect of APA's presence in program support, and in the future APA should maintain this presence as regularly as possible with field visits to program countries.

v. Research

Behind APA's strategies, civil society programs, partnership development, and selection of target communities, is a robust set of research conducted by team members, leading universities, local partners, and international consultants. Research determines what the most-at-risk populations in Africa are, and how these communities can be best supported. APA build relationships with community leaders and develops a deep understanding of local contexts to appreciate the challenges deeply of each community and develop initiatives that reflect the needs as addressed by community members.

Moving Forward: APA research should continue to ensure that projects are effective, and that solutions are driven through research among host communities, not through the imposition of foreign ideas. In the coming five years APA should utilize research to gather

baseline data on additional African countries, with the hopes that this data can lay the groundwork for further partnership expansion into new regions on the continent.

d. d. Advocacy and Lobbying

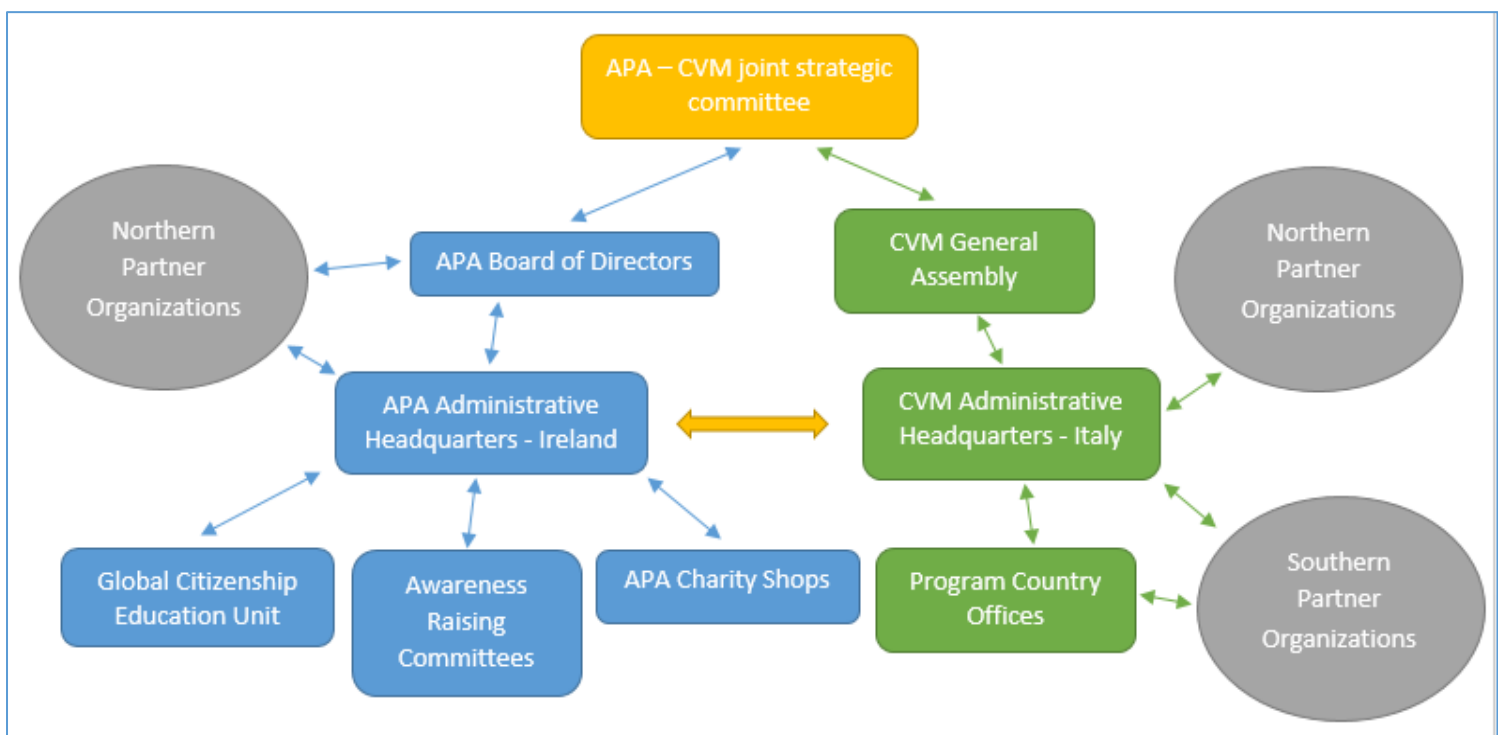
Through its programmes and projects in African countries, APA indicates also a strong interest in promoting political change to safeguard the interests and the needs of the underprivileged people. The concept of the theory of change is rooted in societal change both at community level and political levels. To achieve this kind of change, advocacy and lobbying are necessary part of APA's project work. The projects in Ethiopia and Tanzania for aimed at the rights of domestic workers are in line with this.

Separately, in Ireland APA is a part of a wider community of entities that are advocating for a better world, both in terms of environmental situation and social contexts.

Moving Forward: APA should continue its advocacy and lobbying at local organisations and community, political and government structures in the African countries it operates in to widen the impact of societal change it can bring. APA will also continue its activities in Ireland to promote understanding of global interdependence and of the causes of poverty and international inequality.

e. Organisational Operations

APA consists of a small team based in Dublin, with committees and charity shops working in partnership with the APA headquarters. The following organisational chart depicts the overall organisational structure and the lines of communication within the SWOT outlines some key points to consider over the next five years. Following the SWOT analysis is an overview on the management of APA, and the coordination of staff and volunteers that ensure that APA's operations are ongoing and successful. Finally, key questions in regard to APA's long term sustainability are explored.

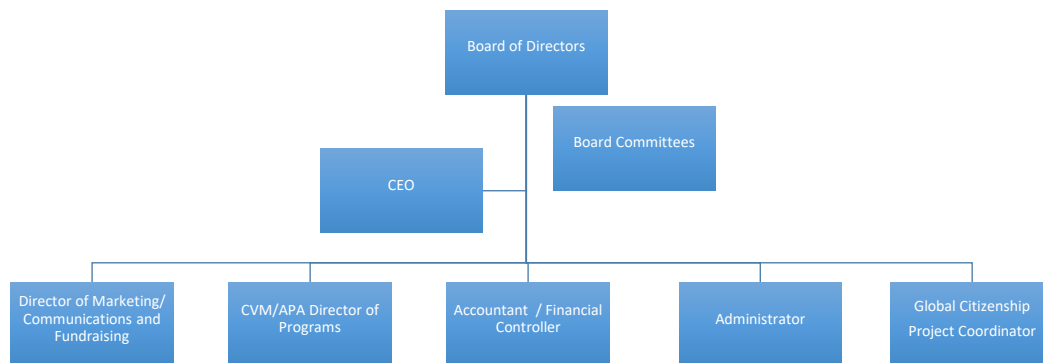


i. SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust network of northern partner organisations (donors, consultants, INGOs, educational institutions) • Healthy relationship with key implementing partners in program countries • Partnership model allows for cost effective large scale impact • Effective use of interns and volunteers • Development and dissemination of curriculum linked Global Citizenship Education materials • Engagement at policy and practice level in the education sector in Ireland • Development philosophy promotes long term sustainable community-led change in program countries • Frequent research being conducted identifying needs in target communities • Dedicated and talented administrative staff • Healthy financial reserve • Reputation and trust of partner organisations allows for greater impact in the field, and for more efficient fundraising • Robust set of qualitative and quantitative evidence for impacts • Charity shops offer a relatively consistent source of income • Charity shops have strong and committed volunteer support • Knowledgeable board members • Good reputation with local government in Ethiopia and Tanzania and Ireland • Clear guiding principles • Robust set of policy documents that adhere to best practice standards in Ireland • Thorough record keeping of all past programs and budgets • Compliance with charity regulations • Strong team of accountants behind the organisation with full Accounting and Tax qualifications • Outsourcing accounting to third parties is cost effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspects of the organisation are partially dependent on an individual's knowledge, reputation, and networks for fundraising • Global Citizenship Education programs are currently dependent on an individual, relationships with schools and contacts of this individual could be threatened with staff turnover • Social media presence is slim, and could potentially benefit from more frequent updates and supporter engagement • Media materials, such as brochures, could be updated to reflect more recent impact • Current website management is technically difficult for users who are not trained in web development • Organisation of digital files on computers is vast and can be challenging to navigate without prior training • Vacant staff member with technical knowledge on website building/social media, etc. • Accounting is conducted on a part-time basis, with one office visit per week • Accounting team comprises of staff members of the accounting firm with two assigned to APA. The contract is rolling, either party could pull out of it at any time
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charity shop model can be replicated for greater financial returns • APA's awareness in Ireland can improve through new marketing strategies • Continual opportunities to improve the capacity of staff • Formalize large informal supporter base through data collection at charity shops and APA events in Ireland • Expand Global Citizenship Education programs in Ireland • Investigate corporate sponsorships for programs • Promote partnerships into additional countries in Africa • Promote the experience of current programs (civil society capacity building, domestic workers, water, etc) • Continue to expand relationship with Irish Aid • Develop media materials that accurately capture APA's development philosophy • Formalize APA's identity in the partnership model to clearly communicate to donors and supporters APA's work • Develop relationship with Ethiopian and Tanzanian diaspora • Supporter database is currently in excel, and could be integrated into Salesforce for improved record keeping • Potential to host further fundraising events throughout Ireland • Opportunity to strengthen the IT department through either volunteer labour or through paid employment • Opportunity to gather more contact information from charity shop donors and customers • New 'VAT Compensation' scheme from the revenue commissioners could see us get a certain portion of VAT paid recovered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining historical fundraising sources over the long-term • Securing resources to maintain employees should management shift to mostly paid staff • Transitioning management, knowledge, and skills from to newcomers • Potential financial and program impact risks should current partners withdraw/lose support • Political stability and support of programming countries can threaten program effectiveness • Measurement and communication of project outcomes to supporter base and potential donors • Workload when staffing is predominantly volunteer or part time • Ensuring that all systems, files, and records are easily transferable to potentially incoming staff • Financing full-time staff members should the need arise to hire them • Developing robust training procedures to smooth over potential staff turnover • Volunteers are not contracted and can leave at will • Recession or changes in government policy could adversely impact Irish Aid's funding <p>Company donors may reduce their co-funding with cuts to their own budgets</p>

ii. Management

APA's headquarters is made up of a small group of paid staff members and volunteers. The lines of communication among positions within the organisation are outlined in the following graph:



APA emphasizes a spirit of volunteerism in all aspects of its work. In the APA management we find determined volunteers to supplement the permanent and semi-permanent team. The organisation assesses the overhead requirements yearly, and designs and recruits volunteers and interns to fulfil these needs. Through cultivating a spirit of volunteerism, APA is able to channel more of its resources directly to the projects with the people in Africa.

While the spirit of voluntarism is the foundation for the organisation, APA also employs permanent and semi-permanent staff members to ensure the organisation and programs are executed to the highest standard.

APA will ensure that the team, staff and volunteers, be of high calibre to adequately fulfil the requirements of the organisation.

IX. Moving Forward

The previous section outlined APA's major activities across five pillars:

- Strategic Partnerships,
- Awareness Raising,
- Programme Support,
- Advocacy and Lobbying, and
- Organisational Operations.

Over the next five years, APA should continue to build and strengthen its robust set of strategic partnerships under a common vision of addressing inequalities that afflict the world's most at-risk communities.

The roots of APA's work are built on a foundation of partnership. However, APA also plays a crucial role as the voice for at-risk communities, and would continue to expand awareness raising and educational programs in Ireland and the global North to facilitate both a more robust network of global citizenship, as well as fostering the global value of volunteerism. APA should achieve these objectives through expansion of its Global Citizenship Education programs, increased output of our media activities, and through the expansion of APA volunteer led charity shops in Ireland. Additionally, the organisation should maintain a strong presence in program governance of its sponsored projects through continual policy developments and trainings, strategic consultations, monitoring and evaluation visits, and through ongoing research.

a. Sustainability Planning

However, in order to ensure the long-term sustainability and viability of the organisation, APA evaluates the following components and devises strategies for ensuring their longevity. The areas of the organisation should be monitored on an ongoing basis:

- **Board Membership, Governance and Compliance**

The current policy framework outlines Board Membership guidelines and term limits. Keeping policies continually updated, training Board members in best practice in regard to non-profit governance and ensuring compliance with the Charities Act and the requirements of the Charities Regulator under which APA operates, are robust and essential aspects of APA's long term longevity.

Additionally, oversight of all aspects of the organisation's sustainability should be ongoing at the Board and executive level. Thus, continuous critical assessment of each key area of APA's sustainability, compliance with regulatory requirements and best practice, and a succession plan for Board and staff is meant to be carried forward through discussions between the Board of Directors and APA's Executive Leadership and result in an actionable timeline and continuous monitoring by the Board of Directors.

- **APA Executive Leadership and Key Person Resource Dependencies**

Much of APA's success has been built on a foundation of expertise and partnerships developed by the founding directors and their continuous work in the development of the organisation. The EU Global Citizenship Education program activities as one of APA's key programs are dependent on the skills and networks of a key individual and the financial activities are managed by the outsourced *Three Square Company* selected by the Board

Although APA's sustainability has a solid foundation set in trusted partner organisations that have been fostered over 15 years, and is further strengthened by the self-sustaining charity shops, it is important that the Board of Directors identify and continually assess key person dependencies at all levels as part of a risk assessment. APA should achieve this through expanding its risk assessment to include key person dependencies, developing means to address those risks and ensure that technical skills, soft skills and information (such as networks, relationships, and knowledge) are transferable and rooted in an organisational framework that rests on a wide base of individuals and competencies.

- **Specialist Staff Members and 3rd Party Service Providers**

An additional key aspect of APA's work is the ability to access external funds by ensuring that APA's accounts and audits are continually prepared and managed to the highest standard. In 2019 APA outsourced its accounting to *Three Square Accounting Company* to maintain the high standard of its accounting records and *Deloitte* have been performing its annual audits to high quality standards to the satisfaction of cofounding partners – EU, Irish Aid and several cofounding partners.

However APA will need to continuously monitor and evaluate its 3rd party financial service providers and the standard of accounting and auditing records to ensure that the organisation's management of accounts is readily transferable and can be performed to a similar standard should key individuals or service providers change.

- **Organisation Management**

Currently, APA's executive leadership is performed partially on a voluntary basis. APA should consider how the organisation will sustain a level of voluntary labour of the organisation at the executive level, or if it will potentially transition its entire management to paid employment in the future, which could have long-term financial challenges.

Additionally, the organisation has historically maintained a presence of volunteers to assist in administrative work, awareness raising, policy maintenance, and research. Channels for recruiting volunteers have been primarily through personal networks or through internships opportunities provided to Dublin-based university students.

Given the importance of maintaining a steady flow of volunteers, APA will need to consider means of ensuring volunteer recruitment over the next five years, the roles in which volunteers will operate and their skills and competencies for performing these roles successfully.

- **Charity Shops**

APA's charity shops operating in Carlow Town, Athlone, and Hacketstown are largely self-contained groups and teams that function with APA oversight and financial support (as outlined in Section B. ii.). Each of the charity shops is run by a combination of committed volunteers from the community and through workers brought on through partnership with the TUS – the Returned to Work program of government. TUS provides people who have been out of work for extended periods of time a job training opportunity. Volunteers handle the day-to-day operations and administration of each of the shops, which is overseen by APA staff.

APA management supports the charity shops through awareness raising, training, overhead finance, and assistance in securing donations of furniture, clothing, bric-a-brac. Funds raised by the charity shops are important to funding of its charitable activities in Africa. They are also important in reducing waste and promoting circular economy.

APA continuously considers and has a robust set of policies and procedure guidelines for volunteer management of each shop. For example, the Athlone and Hacketstown Charity Shops are already self-sufficient in the supply of donated items from local community. Gradually, the 2018 opened Carlow Charity Shop is moving towards self-sustaining stocking.

- **Partnership with CVM and other organisations**

Over the next 5 years, APA should continue and strengthen and expand its civil society programs into additional select countries in Africa through its partnership model with CVM. Maintaining a key partnership with CVM will be central to APA's strategic interest, as CVM offers APA an opportunity to utilise a trusted, verifiable, long term grassroots partner that connects directly to the local associations it seeks to support. In 2019, the Consortium Agreement is updated and being approved by both APA and CVM which supports the continued development of their mutual partnership. The partnership is also strengthened by the five-year joint APA-CVM strategic plan from 2017-2022.

Thus, the current model of development outlined in this strategic plan, which is expanded on in the joint APA-CVM strategic plan, and APA's role within the partnership should continue for the next five years.

- **Key Stakeholders and Funding Partners**

The majority of APA's funds are derived from key partnership with Northern grant making institutions. Over the next five years, APA will need to monitor the sustainability of each of these partnerships and plan on their continued cooperation and the expansion to new stakeholders and to new organisations that could support APA's work.

As part of its relationships' development and future growth, APA should also consider plans to maintain the organisation's presence and strength in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and other selected countries through developing partnerships with other like-minded implementing organisations already active in Africa.